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past, especially at a time when there was no great temptation to destroy neutral ships, cannot be said to constitute a law in the face of the express repudiation by Russia, Germany, and other Powers of the rule of nondestruction at the Second Hague Conference and the London Naval Conference. Customary law rests upon implied consent, which must yield before express dissent.

The volume contains references to the judicial cases in point, including a dozen or more of the cases that have arisen during the present war, while the references in the footnotes to the literature of the questions discussed will prove of use to the student in pursuing the subject further.

C. G. FENWICK.

Official Diplomatic Documents Relating to the Outbreak of the European War. With photographic reproductions of official editions of the documents (Blue, White, Yellow, etc., books) published by the Governments of Austria-Hungary, Belgium, France, Germany, Great Britain, Russia, and Serbia, — Introduction, Daily Summaries, Cross-references and Foot-notes by Edmond von Mach, A.B., A.M., Ph.D. (Harvard). New York: The Macmillan Company. 1916. pp. xxii, 608, with appendix.

In his very interesting and suggestive introduction, Dr. von Mach discusses the value of the various multi-colored diplomatic books published at the outbreak of the war and reaches the conclusion, with which the reviewer is in agreement, that "by a judicious comparison of all . . . an impartial observer may come very near to understanding the truth." He states his "wish to prepare a serviceable source book, not for partisans, but for scholars and intelligent readers," observing that "he has cracked the nut, as it were, that the kernel of truth might lie revealed," and that "his greatest reward therefore will be if scholars agree that he has succeeded in keeping prejudice out of the book, being fair to all and preparing that most necessary of all helps to a scholar, a reliable source book." To keep prejudice out of any book dealing with the diplomatic documents relating to the war, or any review of any book dealing with these documents, is a most difficult task. Entirely aside from national bias, no intelligent man can study these documents carefully enough to justify his writing about them without coming to some very definite conclusions one way or the other,

and having come to these conclusions, it is extremely easy to play up the facts which seem to him to support them, and overlook or unduly minimize other facts which may be thought to point in a contrary direction — and this without any intention to be unfair.

The present reviewer cheerfully admits on the threshold that he came to Dr. von Mach's book equipped from his own first hand study of the documents with a full set of opinions diametrically opposed to those entertained by Dr. von Mach as set forth in Dr. von Mach's writings prior to the present volume. After this confession of his own predisposition, the reviewer feels free to say that in his judgment, while the compilation which Dr. von Mach has produced will be in many ways useful to the student of the diplomatic documents, he has conspicuously failed in his announced purpose to "keep prejudice out of the book."

The most useful thing about the volume is its arrangement, the multi-colored "books" issued by the different governments being broken up and the despatches printed chronologically according to their dates "and within the dates according to the alphabetical order of the countries which sent or received them." Everyone who has dealt seriously with the documents must have made this chronological arrangement at least mentally for himself, and it is a comfort and convenience to have it made physically. The despatches of each day, with two or three exceptions when few despatches appeared, are preceded by a brief summary of the diplomatic exchanges of that date, and are supplied with elaborate notes consisting of cross-references, explanations, suggestions, etc., etc. This system of references extends not merely to the official diplomatic documents, but to various other documents "frequently quoted but not contained in the official publications" such as the German Chancellor's speech of August 4, 1914, the "Brussels documents," the telegrams and letters exchanged between the various sovereigns, etc., etc., all of which are quite properly included in Dr. von Mach's volume. The appendix contains photographic reproductions of the various official publications.

Of course, the value of the work from the scholarly point of view must lie in the summaries and foot-notes, and it is here that the reviewer is constrained to believe that prejudice creeps in. Aside from the notes which are merely useful cross-references, the great bulk of the notes are argumentative criticisms of the documents of the Allied Powers and of their contentions. Aside from a very fair general admission in the introduction as to the meagerness of the German docu-

ments, the criticisms of the documents of the Central Powers or of the Teutonic viewpoint are practically nil. It would seem, therefore, that the impartiality of the book can only be defended either on the theory that the merits of the Allied documents speak for themselves or that they have none. The general argumentative and controversial character of the foot-notes can be better understood by quoting one of the despatches, together with Dr. von Mach's foot-notes, than in any other way. The despatch selected is the note of M. Davignon, Belgian Minister for Foreign Affairs, to Herr von Below Saleske, German Minister at Brussels, of August 3, 1914, Belgian Gray Book, No. 22, von Mach, pp. 421-422:

The German Government stated in their note of the 2nd August,¹ 1914, that according to reliable information French forces intended to march on the Meuse via Givet and Namur, and that Belgium, in spite of the best intentions, would not be in a position to repulse, without assistance, an advance of French troops.²

The German Government, therefore, considered themselves compelled to anticipate this attack and to violate Belgian territory. In these circumstances Germany proposed to the Belgian Government to adopt a friendly attitude towards her, and undertook, on the conclusion of peace, to guarantee the integrity of the Kingdom and its possessions to their full extent. The note added that if Belgium put difficulties in the way of the advance of German troops, Germany would be compelled to consider her as an enemy, and to leave the ultimate adjustment of the relations between the two States to the decision of arms.

This note had made a deep and painful impression³ upon the Belgian Government.

The intentions attributed to France by Germany are in contradiction to the formal declarations made to us on August 1, in the name of the French Government.

Moreover, if, contrary to our expectation, Belgian neutrality should be violated by France, Belgium intends to fulfil her international obligations and the Belgian army would offer the most vigorous resistance to the invader.⁴

¹ Belgian Gray Book, No. 20, August 2.

² This is exactly the same argument advanced by Great Britain in the second of the Brussels documents (see p. 580) when the British officer claimed that the British troops would enter Belgium even unasked.

³ The ring of sincerity in this sentence is lessened after having studied the document mentioned in the previous note.

⁴ It would, however, have been almost hopeless, for since Great Britain had the military secrets of Belgium, France had them also, undoubtedly. See documents mentioned in preceding notes.

The treaties of 1839, confirmed ⁵ by the treaties of 1870, vouch for the independence and neutrality of Belgium under the guarantee of the Powers, and notably of the Government of His Majesty the King of Prussia.

Belgium has always been faithful to her international obligations,⁶ she has carried out her duties in a spirit of loyal impartiality, and she has left nothing undone to maintain and enforce respect for her neutrality.

The attack upon her independence ⁷ with which the German Government threaten her constitutes a flagrant violation of international law. No strategic interest justifies such a violation of law.

The Belgian Government, if they were to accept the proposals submitted to them, would sacrifice the honour of the nation and betray their duty towards Europe.

Conscious of the part which Belgium has played for more than eighty years in the civilization ⁸ of the world, they refuse to believe that the independence of Belgium can only be preserved at the price of the violation of her neutrality.

If this hope is disappointed the Belgian Government are firmly resolved to repel, by all the means in their power, every attack upon their rights.

In like manner, it appears to the reviewer that the daily summaries are colored by the editor's viewpoint and both by what is stated and still more by what is not stated are converted into arguments. The following extract from the summary for August 4th, p. 432, may be taken as illustrative of this point:

"*Great Britain* sends an ultimatum to Germany concerning the neutrality of Belgium. Since she, however, announces herself to be the ally of France, who is at war with Germany, even the acceptance by Germany of the terms of the ultimatum could not have kept *Great Britain* neutral. At the same time she urges Belgium to resist the expected invasion with force of arms, this being her reply to Belgium's appeal for diplomatic intervention, which as the ally of France she could, of course, not render."

For further illustration of the argumentative and conversable character of the book the reader is referred to practically any page containing a foot-note or a summary. That these foot-notes and summaries have, however, not impressed everyone as they do the

⁵ It had been claimed in Parliament in 1870 that the treaties of 1870 invalidated those of 1839. See the editor's *Germany's Point of View*, the chapters on Belgium.

⁶ Germany claims that this is not true in view of the Brussels documents.

⁷ Germany had explicitly disclaimed making any attack on the "independence" of Belgium.

⁸ The writer here forgot the chapter of Belgian atrocities in the Congo.

present reviewer may be inferred from the statement of one of Dr. von Mach's distinguished admirers (and presumably readers) who says (in the *Staats-Zeitung*): "I like Dr. von Mach's book because it does not obtrude his opinions upon the reader."

Many of the criticisms of the Allied documents appear to the reviewer to pick flaws which are too microscopic to be worth much attention. See, for instance, the following notes, stressing the use of the word *ally* in the despatches: p. 443, note 2; p. 444, note 4; p. 445, note 2; p. 447, note 6; or the following relating to the precise language used in various despatches in referring to Belgian neutrality: p. 438, note 5; p. 439, note 1; and p. 440, note 2.

In a despatch of M. Paul Cambon, French Ambassador at London, to his Government, dated August 3rd (French Yellow Book, No. 143, von Mach, pp. 425-426), the Ambassador refers to a telephonic communication from Paris, and Dr. von Mach appends the following note: "This is very important, because it suggests that besides the *written* communications which are printed in the official books of documents, other communications were exchanged between London and Paris and undoubtedly other places too." It is quite true, as has been pointed out by others, that the telephone introduces a new and important element into modern diplomatic exchanges, but in view of the microscopic details with which Dr. von Mach's foot-notes deal, one wonders why this "important" point was not at least tied up by a cross reference with an earlier despatch of July 31st from Sir Edward Goschen, British Ambassador at Berlin to Sir Edward Grey (British Blue Book, No. 121, von Mach pp. 386-387), in which Sir Edward Goschen refers to telephonic communications between Berlin and Vienna.

One clear misstatement of an important fact merits special notice. In the summary for Wednesday, August 5th, the author says, p. 459, "Great Britain declares war on Germany as of 11 A.M." etc. This was probably a careless assumption from Belgian Gray Book, No. 41, of August 5th, which recites that Great Britain has informed Germany "that a state of war existed between the two countries as from 11 o'clock"; but of course the 11 o'clock referred to was 11 o'clock at night of August 4th. (See Mr. Asquith's declaration in Parliament August 5, 1914, where he said "since 11 o'clock last night a state of war has existed between Germany and ourselves" (British Blue Book, von Mach's photographic reproduction, p. 98).

As Dr. von Mach points out in the introduction, "a great amount

of additional information" gathered from all sources has been included in the foot-notes. This information, however, is not always of a character which commends itself for insertion in an impartial source book for scholars. For instance, see note 2 on page 73 in which Dr. von Mach states what appears to be his understanding (not in quotation marks) of an affidavit which he states is in his possession, made by parties unnamed, as to what they say a British officer, who is named, said in an address before the Boston Press Club in 1915 about what his superiors told him in June and July, 1914, and how he went to Antwerp in pursuance of these instructions "about one week before the first declaration of war . . . to concert measures with the head of the Belgian secret service;" — all of which Dr. von Mach appears to think worthy of consideration as tending to explain why Belgium commenced to take precautions to preserve her neutrality on July 24, 1914.

In conclusion, the reviewer wishes to say again that, once the partisan character of the book is frankly admitted, it is a useful compilation, but as "a serviceable source book not for partisans but for scholars and intelligent readers" it distinctly fails to register.

WILLIAM C. DENNIS.

The United States Post Office: Its Past Record, Present Conditions, and Potential Relations to the New World Era. By Daniel C. Roper. Illustrated. New York: Funk and Wagnalls Co. 1917.

Mr. Roper was for three years the First Assistant Postmaster General, and his efficient services led to his appointment as Vice Chairman of the New Tariff Commission, and subsequently as Commissioner of Internal Revenue, — perhaps the most onerous and important post in the government service, under existing war conditions, next to that of a Cabinet officer. He has written this volume, as he says in the preface, in the belief that the world war marks the beginning of a new era for our country, and that there opens up for the federal postal service in consequence a greater potentiality for service to the country and mankind than it has ever rendered in the past.

The book is a concise and readable survey of the origin and development of the federal postal system, and of the various steps which mark the history of this development. It describes the internal workings of the post office; the development of the railway mail service: the star